



The Point:

Guard against Self-Sufficiency

The Outline:

Guard Against Self-Sufficiency

- The threat in the church
- Confidence in the flesh
- Paul's own ground for confidence in the flesh
- Why this is 'loss'

RELATE:

-Have you ever known someone who 'gave up all' for a certain cause or pursuit (whether spiritual or otherwise)? What was their story?

REFLECT:

-What insight, principle or observation did you find most helpful, encouraging or troubling?

-When you think of the phrase 'self-sufficient', what comes to mind? Is this mainly a positive thing or a negative?

-What was the primary threat to communities of faith in the New Testament period with regard to legalism?

Check out Colossians 2:16 and Galatians 2:11-14, and Galatians 5:1-6

-What does it mean (in this passage) for a person to be 'confident' in the flesh?

-Have you run into an attitude of 'confidence in the flesh' or 'self-sufficiency'? Was it in the church or in the world?



-Look again at Paul's list of reasons for 'confidence in the flesh' (vv. 4-6). Which ones of these were his by birth and which ones were his by his own effort?

-If you had to create your own list of things to be 'confident in flesh', what would they be? Try using the same two categories: 1) things that were your by birth, 2) things that were achieved because of your own effort

-How can we fall into a trap of self-sufficiency as Christians (as opposed to reliance on the gospel)? Where and When are we most prone to do this?

-What does it mean for Paul to 'count as loss' all of the advantages that he had earned in a religious context?

-Is loss merely 'not getting the benefit', or something different? Why does this matter as we think about our own works?

-Imagine for a moment that you were trying to share Christ with someone. As you talked they said, 'I think that by and large I'm a good person who desires to help people and do what's right. I think that God would accept me.' How would you respond?

RESPOND:

-Pray that our focus would daily be on the work of Christ on our behalf, rather than our own effort.

-Pray that God would empower us to share the gospel with those around us who are trusting in 'self-sufficiency' of one form or another. (Challenge your group to think specifically of those in their lives who need Christ)

Local Focus: Christ The Redeemer in West Central Spokane, Pastor Carey Hughes. Pastor Carey asked that we pray for CTR to become a more prayerful church and keep the gospel central in everything they do. Also, for their youth group and ministry to young mothers (which are two main ways they are impacting their neighborhood).